



# Economic Development Newsletter

June/July 2017

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## Introduction

Welcome to the June/July edition of the newsletter. In this edition, we round up the latest news from Milton Keynes Council's (MKC) Economic Development Team. Once again, Milton Keynes is at the forefront of innovation, culture and economic growth, with the opening of the UK's first multi-brand electric vehicle experience centre, another top place in the UK Powerhouse Report and the city's first ever celebration of creative urban living.

### Powerhouse Report

For the third consecutive quarter, Milton Keynes has been recognised as leading the way for employment growth.

The UK Powerhouse is an extensive business study produced by Irwin Mitchell and leading economic think-tank Cebr. The latest report, published in July, looks at performance in quarter 1 of 2017 and highlights employment growth of 1.9% in Milton Keynes. This places Milton Keynes above cities including Manchester, Oxford and Inner London.

And in relation to GVA (gross value added), the report highlights an increase of 2.8% in Milton Keynes, just 0.1% lower than Cambridge who topped the GVA growth table.

The latest report includes a particular focus on the financial sector, with Milton Keynes identified as one of the UK's top ten financial powerhouse cities.

To view the report please visit the website <http://www.irwinmitchell.com/ukpowerhouse>

### UK's first multi-brand electric vehicle experience centre opens in CMK

Chargemaster, the UK's biggest name in electric vehicle charging, has opened the UK's first multi-brand Electric Vehicle (EV) Experience Centre in Milton Keynes.

The EV Experience Centre, located on Crown Walk within the Centre:MK, was officially opened by Roads Minister Jesse Norman MP. The Centre will be run by a team of professionally trained EV Gurus who will be on hand to offer impartial information and advice on all aspects of electric vehicles from advice on particular models through to the availability of government grants and different charging options.

With support from six vehicle manufacturers as founding partners, the EV Experience Centre will initially showcase models from BMW i, Kia, Mitsubishi, Nissan, Renault and Volkswagen, with visitors able to test drive the latest electric cars.

Furthermore, the AA Trust, also a founding partner of the centre, will be running its new Drive Electric lessons, from the EV Experience Centre. The lessons have been designed by Drive Tech



and will be delivered by AA instructors, to help drivers better understand electric vehicles, and how to get the best out of them when driving.

The EV Experience Centre is one of a number of initiatives being launched by the Council under the government funded Go Ultra Low City scheme. The scheme aims to promote the uptake of electric vehicles with the aspiration that, within five years, electric vehicles will make up 23% of all new car sales. Initiatives include significant investment in infrastructure, including the creation of a number of EV charging 'hubs', free parking for EVs and further grants for workplace and home charging.

David Martell, Chief Executive of Chargemaster described the opening of the EV Experience Centre as "a landmark moment for electric vehicles in the UK" whilst Roads Minister Jesse Norman MP highlighted: "We awarded £9m to Milton Keynes to encourage the take-up of ultra-low emission vehicles and it is great to see the city leading the way. There are now more than 100,000 ultra-low emission vehicles on our roads, and it is our ambition that nearly every car and van in the UK is zero-emission by 2050."

For more information on the EV Experience Centre visit <https://evexperiencecentre.co.uk/>

### **First Women Awards**

At the end of June I had the pleasure of attending the First Women Awards in London. The awards recognise and celebrate the achievements of women across a range of sectors, acknowledging the role of all nominees in breaking down traditional barriers and driving innovation. It was a fantastic event and the stories of the winners and nominees were inspirational.

To top it all, the First Women of Science and Technology award went to our very own Elizabeth Sheldon, CEO of Milton Keynes based computer forensics business Evidence Talks. Judges described Elizabeth as a "stand-out candidate" with a "fascinating career route", adding "she works tirelessly to help keep us safe, perhaps in a way we don't always see in terms of cyber and security."

Elizabeth is one of the few women in the UK working in the field of cyber security and her nomination for the First Women Awards follows earlier double success in the Women Leaders MK Awards 2016. Well done!

I was also excited to be on the shortlisting panel for this year's Women Leaders MK Awards. The quality of the nominations was excellent. I'm looking forward to interviewing those shortlisted in September and to attending the awards evening on 13 October which promises to be another great night. Milton Keynes Council:Invest MK are delighted to be sponsoring the Business Services MK50 Special Award.

### **MK CityFest 2017**

Between 27 June and 2 July, Middleton Hall in the centre:mk was transformed into the venue for MK CityFest.

The festival, the first of its kind celebrating creative urban living in Milton Keynes, is part of the Creative and Cultured City project put forward by the MK Futures 2050 Commission.



Highlights of the week included the annual conferences of the International New Town Institute (INTI) and the Academy of Urbanism (AoU) which provided a great platform on which to showcase the city to an international audience. The conferences were accompanied by an innovative public programme of walks, talks, live music and family activities, exploring various aspects of future city design and urban living.

MK CityFest provided an opportunity to discuss with expert practitioners how the city's heritage as an icon of urban planning and design can be combined with its emergence as a leading smart city to create new opportunities for economic growth and the development of our cultural offer.

The week also represented another major step forward for Milton Keynes in becoming a European Destination City. Almost 200 delegates from across Europe were impressed by Milton Keynes as a designed city and the programme presented. Furthermore, as a result of MK Cityfest, a number of important city connections have been made that will help MK build its European networks for a 2019 Festival of Creative Urban Living and its 2023 European Capital of Culture programme.

### **MK Innovates**

Hot on the heels of MK CityFest came MK Innovate, a two-day festival showcasing science, technology, engineering and mathematics excellence in Milton Keynes. The festival featured some of the city's most innovative technology businesses including ABB Robotics, Red Bull and Niftylift, who were on hand to demonstrate some of their work and to inspire young people to consider the different career opportunities available. Local further education and higher education establishments were also in attendance to talk about the different learning options and courses offered. InvestMK even attended to demonstrate our innovative and extremely exciting 3D Map App.

## **SEMLEP News**

### **European Social Fund (ESF)**

Representatives from the Economic Development Team and Economic Regeneration attended a recent ESF Stakeholder Consultation event organised by SEMLEP.

The aim of the event was to brief stakeholders on the next round of ESF calls and to gather local opinion and evidence on the areas which funding should support. The call for funding applications is expected to commence in the autumn. Further updates will be available on the SEMLEP website [www.semlep.com](http://www.semlep.com)

## **Team News**

### **3D Map App of Milton Keynes**

As part of MK CityFest, we were pleased to hold a preview event to showcase our 3D Map App. The App represents a new and exciting way to promote Milton Keynes to potential inward investors, to highlight the city's range of visitor attractions, and for businesses to promote themselves to new and existing customers.



Virtual Viewing Ltd have been commissioned to deliver the app, and with support from the Economic Development Team, a number of sites, attractions and businesses have already been modelled in 3D and placed into the 3D Map. Each model will have clickable content (wording, pictures, links to websites) providing the end user with further information.

Around fifty partners and stakeholders attended the event, at which the 3D Map App was demonstrated for the first time. The event was also attended by representatives from Destination MK and Amazing CMK who provided an update on the visitor economy and the CMK Business Improvement District.

### **Economic Development Strategy**

On 19 July, the draft Economic Development Strategy 2017-2027 was considered and approved by the Council.

The Economic Development Strategy will guide the local approach to economic development over the next ten years. The strategy recognises the success that Milton Keynes has enjoyed and seeks to build on this, taking advantage of emerging opportunities and addressing the challenges that growth has brought.

A big thank you goes to all our colleagues and partners who have helped to shape the strategy and who will continue to play a key role as we now look to deliver the Economic Development Strategy.

A copy of the strategy can be found on the council [website](#).

### **Kents Hill**

Milton Keynes Development Partnership (MKDP) and leading independent hospital group Spire Healthcare have agreed, subject to planning approval, to develop a purpose-built private hospital on a site in Kents Hill. The Economic Development Team was instrumental in making the initial introductions and it's great to see the scheme coming to fruition. The state-of-the-art facility will be Spire Healthcare's 40<sup>th</sup> hospital in the UK and will incorporate the most modern design and configuration concepts, with a capital investment by Spire Healthcare planned to be around £70m. The scheme is expected to generate around 250 new jobs for Milton Keynes and will deliver significant improvements to private and public healthcare in the city.

### **Approval for intu development**

There was some excellent news for CMK in July as the proposal to extend the intu shopping centre was given the go ahead by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.

The proposal includes the creation of a new dining quarter and boutique cinema as well as improvements to the space in and around Midsummer Boulevard and Oak Court. The scheme will be one of the most significant retail and leisure development projects in Central Milton Keynes in over a decade.

The Economic Development Team, alongside other council departments, played an important role in emphasising the economic argument for the development and in encouraging CMK businesses to have their say on the proposals.



Martin Breeden, regional director of intu, said: “We’re delighted that our proposals have been approved. intu Milton Keynes is already the premium fashion pitch in the city and these plans will strengthen its position, creating a contemporary destination for customers to shop, eat, relax and socialise. We’ve had some good interest in the scheme as brands recognise the opportunity that Milton Keynes provides.”

The proposed work at intu Milton Keynes is part of a £1.5bn development pipeline in the UK over the next 10 years by intu.

### **Business Visits**

In June we met with the Transport Systems Catapult to discuss their support for SMEs and their Intelligent Mobility Skills Strategy. The Skills Strategy highlights some of the skills issues facing the UK around intelligent mobility and the importance of a range of initiatives to address these challenges. It was encouraging to note the support that the Transport Systems Catapult can offer to businesses involved in intelligent mobility, from consultancy and access to expert resources, through to Hackathons and customised networking events.

We met with the University of Bedfordshire to discuss their ICT escalator project, which provides specialist support for SMEs looking to increase their digital capability. This gave us the opportunity to learn more about the project and discuss the changing digital landscape for SMEs. We also discussed other projects aimed at SMEs that the University are involved with, such as Innovation Bridge which provides SMEs and start-ups with support to develop and grow a new product or service.

Commercial property and availability was on the agenda when we met with Bidwells, commercial property agents in Milton Keynes. This meeting gave us the opportunity to discuss the new Economic Development Strategy and the commercial property market in Milton Keynes. As part of our work to encourage inward investment and support growing businesses, it is vital that we are aware of the availability of commercial space locally. These meetings enable us to provide updates on current council projects and programmes as well as discussing the challenges in the commercial property market.

### **Social Media**

Our social media presence goes from strength to strength. Our Twitter followers at the end of July stood at 4,434 (an increase of 2.7% from May) and our LinkedIn connections are at 2,957 (an increase of 0.9% from May). The Economic Development team continues to utilise social media as one of its channels to promote Milton Keynes. It is vital that we remain competitive, constantly and consistently engaging with our national and international stakeholders.

### **Help Spread the Word**

Follow us at @InvestMK at [www.twitter.com/InvestMK](https://www.twitter.com/InvestMK) and by joining our LinkedIn group at <https://uk.linkedin.com/in/investmk>

Pam Gosal

**Head of Corporate Economic Development & Inward Investment**

**Economic Development: Invest MK contact: 01908 200800**

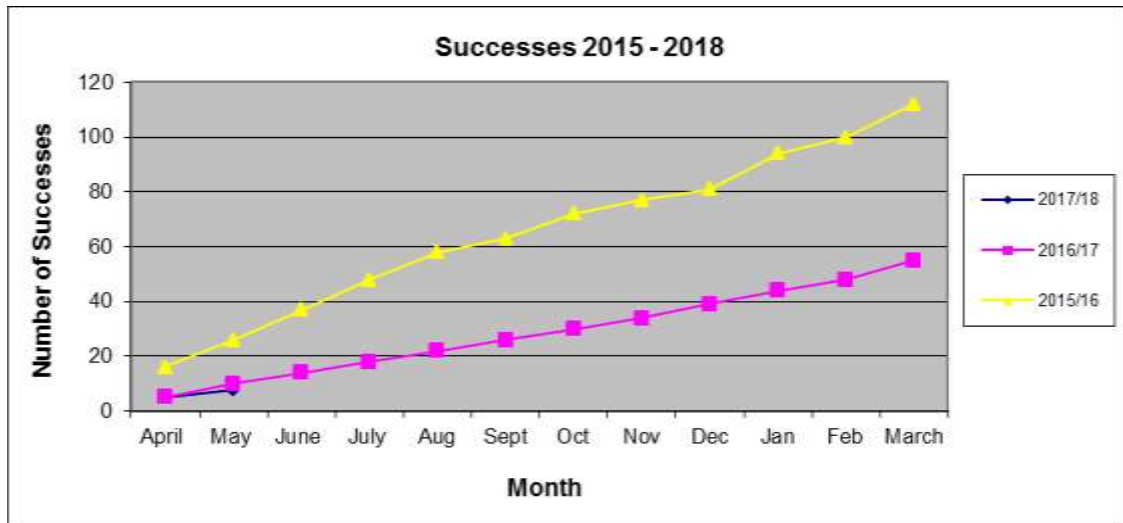
**[enquiries@investmiltonkeynes.com](mailto:enquiries@investmiltonkeynes.com)**



**Investment Success Update**

	June 2017	July 2017	Year to date
Companies arriving in or relocating within MK	2	3	13
From Target Group*	1	2	7
Total Jobs Created	19	18	170
Total Jobs Retained	25	0	568

\* High growth, high value, knowledge-based businesses



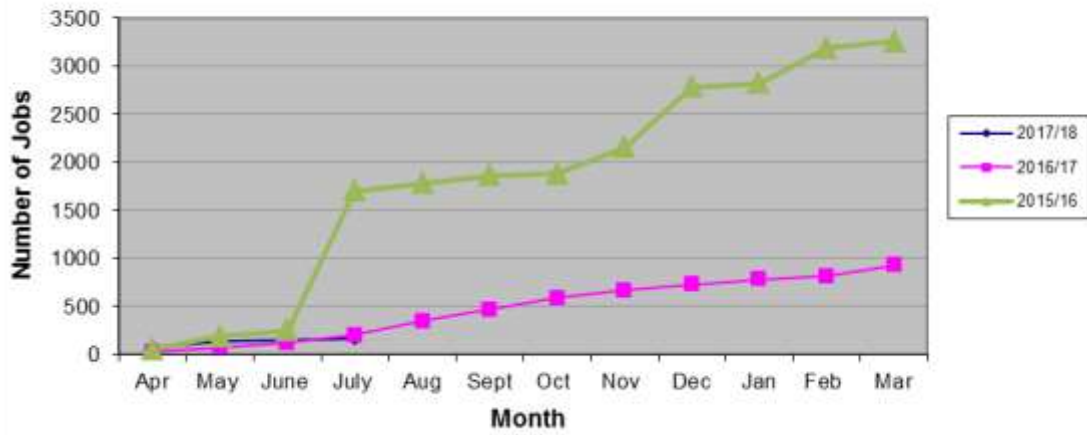


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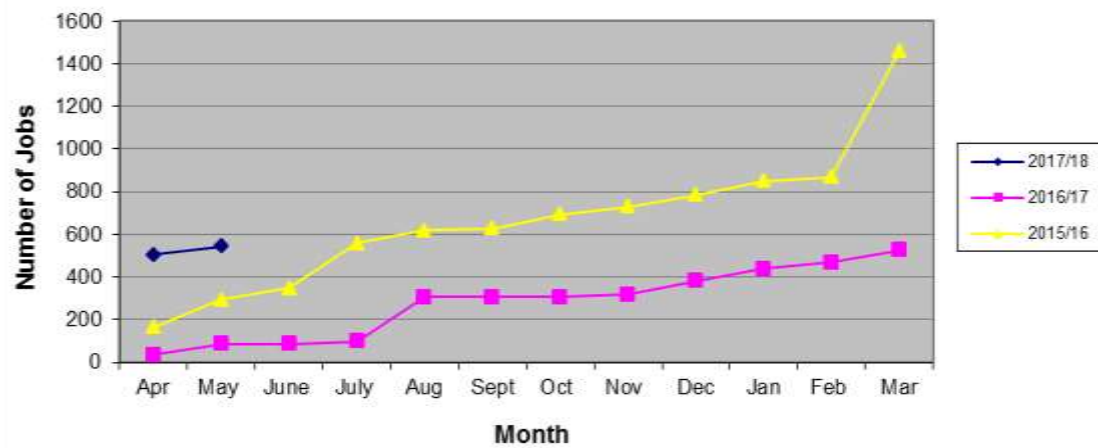


milton keynes council

Jobs Created 2015 - 2018

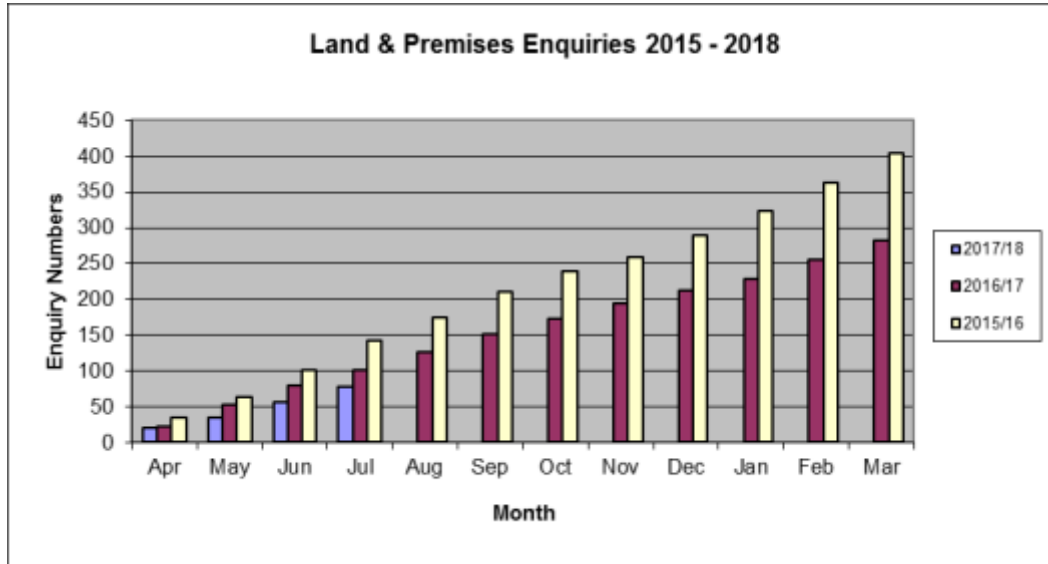


Jobs Retained 2015-2018



**Enquiry Activity Update**

The chart below shows the trends for commercial land & premises enquiries between 2014–2017:



**Enquiries**

During June and July, 42 enquiries were received as well as five investment successes consisting of two micro, three small businesses. The team continues to promote MK through multiple channels and partners. Our current enquiry caseload is 27 category ‘A’ and 47 category ‘B’ enquiries. (Category ‘A’ covers enquiries from UKTI and foreign owned businesses; land enquiries; industrial premises over 50k sqft; office premises over 10k sqft. and key business sectors. Category ‘B’ enquiries cover all other requests for support.)

<b>Enquiries by Sector</b>	<b>June 2016</b>	<b>June 2017</b>	<b>July 2016</b>	<b>July 2017</b>
Office	6	5	2	3
Industrial	7	7	8	7
Retail	3	3	6	2
Land	1	3	4	3
Information and Support	9	4	3	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>20</b>

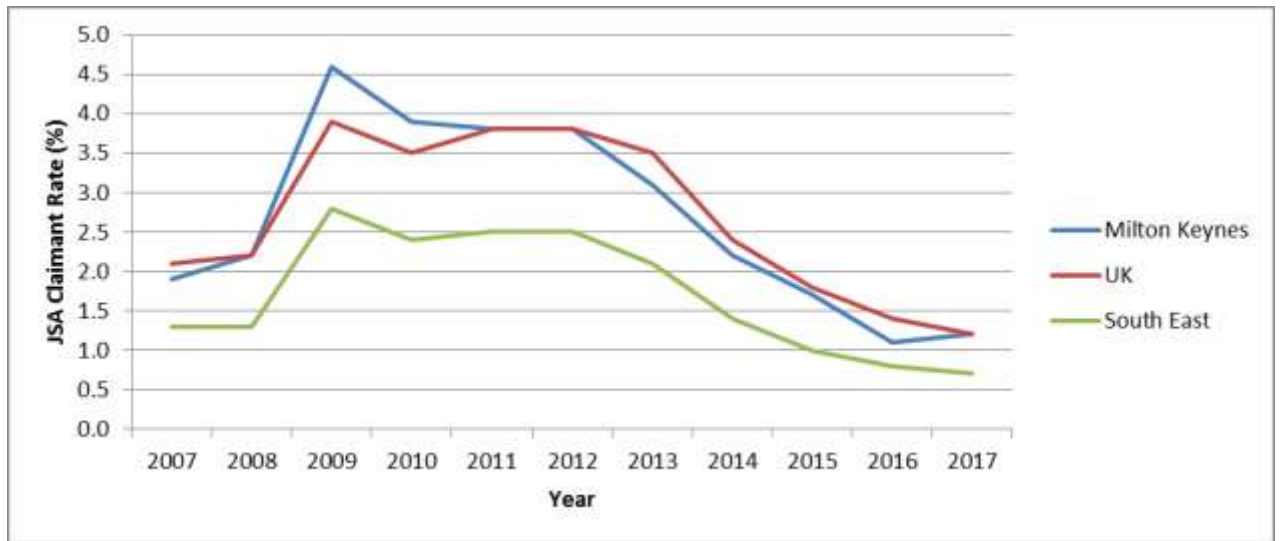




**The Labour Market in Milton Keynes, July 2017**

The JSA claimant count rate in Milton Keynes was 1.2% in July 2017. This is the same rate as in June 2017 but 0.1% higher than in July 2016.

**Chart 1: JSA Claimant Rate Milton Keynes, South East & UK 2007-2017**



	Milton Keynes	UK	South East
2007	1.9	2.1	1.3
2008	2.2	2.2	1.3
2009	4.6	3.9	2.8
2010	3.9	3.5	2.4
2011	3.8	3.8	2.5
2012	3.8	3.8	2.5
2013	3.1	3.5	2.1
2014	2.2	2.4	1.4
2015	1.7	1.8	1.0
2016	1.1	1.4	0.8
2017	1.2	1.2	0.7

Source: Jobseekers Allowance, Office for National Statistics via NOMIS. NB: Claimant count data is taken from July of each year.



### **Getting our residents back into work**

The council's Neighbourhood Employment Programme (NEP) has experienced some challenges in relation to the fall in numbers of new clients accessing the service. A review of job club usage has consequently been carried out resulting in the closure of one job club with the lowest attendance levels and the introduction of a new job club in a new area with high levels of unemployment. In addition, the NEP is undertaking a variety of promotional activities to ensure that residents remain aware of this community based employability support service. Regardless of footfall the NEP has still managed to support 109 people into employment and 37 people to obtain an accredited qualification over the last two months. This remains a huge achievement considering the decrease in unemployment levels in MK and is still an indication of the continuous need to support those with additional barriers to employment.

The Mental Health Employment Support team continues to provide support, registering 32 new clients, supporting six people to obtain employment and three successfully gaining an accredited qualification. The Mental Health team also joined an event with the Works 4 Us group, raising awareness and promoting the Mental Health service to other professionals within the statutory and third sectors. Additionally, following a recent Disability Providers Event sponsored by the local job centre it was decided that the job centre would operate a regular providers forum where organisations could share good practice, keep each other up to date and collaborate on projects supporting unemployed people with a disability into work. The NEP Mental Health team were also invited to participate at the event and have been invited to become part of this forum. The Troubled Families (Strengthening Families programme), has continued to make progress during this period and is currently turning its attention towards sustainability and measuring the long term impact of the programme, both for families and services.

Equality Works, with its focus on supporting unemployed people with 'additional needs' have continued to support some of its clients with leaflet distribution and paper rounds. In addition, they have been able to set up and support several clients through interviews and work placements with the potential to secure employment when completed. They also continue to provide in-work support to those who have secured employment. This on-going support is an essential requirement to ensure opportunities are maximised and work is sustained for this client group.

Community Learning, who support young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) in MK saw an increase in clients again in this period and are currently seeing around 847 young people. The NEET average currently stands at 3.9% in MK which is a great reduction on the last quarter which was 5.1%.

Job Centre Plus remain key players in reducing unemployment levels in MK. They continue to offer job club space to groups with specialist needs in addition to making their venue available to new and existing employers for recruitment events and interview days. There are very strong working relationships between JCP and MK Council which continue to progress as a result of synergies between our employability support services.

The Economic Development (ED) team work closely with Economic Regeneration. Enquiries from businesses interested in employing staff via the NEP, are passed through to the Regeneration team. The ED team work hard to promote the work of the NEP partnership wherever possible.